

Constructing the Evolution of International Factors on War Model with a Comparative Political Perspective

—Taking the War in Ukraine as an Example

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Abstract: In terms of the state of Europe, Michael E. O’Hanlon believes that even if the war in Ukraine ends soon, the events so far have changed the security environment in Europe. The tripwire strategy NATO has used in the Baltic states and Poland since about 2017 must now be replaced by a permanent forward defense posture of modest size and scope. Starting with two external factors, aid and sanctions, this paper uses a comparative political science approach to construct a military and economic model of the Russo-Ukrainian war by September 2022. This paper finds that Ukraine is constrained by its strength and weapons in the face of advanced operational command concepts and cannot effectively stop Russia. This ideological difference has led to a failure to achieve a balanced model of war, while at the same time, we note that all sides are also managing the risk of war escalation. The lack of planning for economic sanctions against Russia and the vacillating attitudes of the West, including the US, make the course of the war and subsequent reconstruction far from certain.

Keywords: evolution, international factors, war model, comparative political perspective, Ukraine

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

For the post-epidemic world, the launch of a Russian “special military operation” against Ukraine in late February 2022 is a factor that cannot be ignored as having a huge impact on the world’s political and economical, and indeed on the wider landscape.

In the early days of the war, almost all commentators and analysts thought it would be over soon. However, the lack of preparedness of the Russian forces in many aspects of their performance, including the military, forced people to change their minds. In contrast, despite its obvious disadvantage in terms of air power and firepower, the Ukrainian army not only held off the hasty Russian attack but also made it costly, thanks to flexible tactics, better intelligence coordination, and mastery of the tactics of information warfare.

Russian forces had to adjust their strategic deployment and tactics and abandon Kyiv from April 2022. Early in April, Ukrainian forces retook a sizable portion of the region surrounding Kiev after Russia gave up its advance on the city. [1] Russian forces shifted to focus their forces on the Donbas region. Russian forces did manage to completely capture Lugansk and much of Donetsk in the subsequent period but at considerable cost. The Ukrainian army, for its part, demonstrated a major problem, namely the lack of heavy weapons and long-range firepower, and had to delay the Russian progress as long as possible, thus bartering space for time. The international context of this period played a crucial role in influencing the course of the war. This article focuses on several aspects of this period through the lens of comparative politics. We will discuss them in various ways.

First, the aid of more heavy weaponry from NATO (especially the US and the UK), which after July in terms of equipment posture, saw the combat power of the Ukrainian army rise and that of the Russian army fall.

Second, the international impact in economic terms is very clear. At this stage, the US joined a group of Western countries to launch sanctions against Russia. In order to break Russia completely, the US and Europe announced a series of economic sanctions against Russia, including freezing Russian bank assets, an embargo on Russian energy, and other means. A soaring trade surplus and many signs that the Russian economy has escaped the effects of Western sanctions. High oil and gas prices have played an important role in easing the pressure on Russia's economy. The ruble is currently 30% higher than it was before the invasion, and the central bank is anticipated to further lower interest rates [2]. As of mid-May 2022, the Kyiv School of Economics estimated the total losses caused by the war had been estimated at 564 to 600 billion USD [3].

Third, regional political factors should be considered due to the international play of forces. The EU's prior conceptions of a "shared neighborhood" with Russia, which included the presence of "grey zones" on the EU's borders and resulted in a security deficit in the area, have been exposed as inadequate and foolish by Russia's war against Ukraine [4]. Regarding Europe, the Central European nations, who are directly next to Ukraine, are very worried about the country's peace and stability as well as the lack of any military threats on its eastern frontiers. Their readiness to put up ambitious plans, such as offering Ukraine a special accelerated road to EU membership or arming Ukraine with fighter planes, etc., is relevant in this perspective. Ukraine's accession to the alliance would also help resolve the regional security dilemma created by the reluctance of European states to join Ukraine and Russia's stance on NATO's eastward expansion. A clash of perceptions appears intuitive in this phase of the war development model.

In terms of the state of Europe, Michael E. O'Hanlon believes that even if the war in Ukraine ends soon, the events so far have changed the security environment in Europe. Beyond the tripwire strategy NATO has used in the Baltic states and Poland since about 2017, a permanent forward defense posture of moderate size and scope is now required [5].

1.2. Literature Review

García warns us that the war in Ukraine has highlighted a serious structural flaw in the global food system, a major factor in ensuring social stability. There will soon be a severe food and economic crisis, which will not only make the starvation circumstances for populations impacted by conflicts worse but also fuel the formation of civil unrest. It is getting more and harder to be able to respond to the problems the world food system poses. The immediate requirement is to prevent societal unrest brought on by rising food costs. The global food system has to undergo a significant transition in the medium and long term [6].

Santayana argues that the war in Ukraine marked the end of an era, so countries' assistance and reactions to it must consider other factors such as geopolitics. A realignment of powers is occurring as a result of the ongoing and possible military conflict, which might cause a significant division of

the world into belligerent blocs with different alignments. The continued support of Beijing and New Delhi will be essential to Russia's survival. The most cogent solution to the immense difficulties at hand would be a really unified EU. As far as NATO is concerned, a truly united EU would be the most consistent underlying logic and way forward for this war [7].

Hooker argues that another major perspective and the logic followed for aid to this war is that the world does not want it to expand. This means that continuing to provide financial assistance, sharing intelligence, and providing humanitarian aid are the most direct ways to do so. This is due to the fact that assisting in the defeat of the Russian forces in Ukraine is the most efficient approach to avoid spillover onto NATO territory. The simplest way to do this while avoiding direct NATO engagement is to provide Ukraine with food, gasoline, spare parts, and new equipment. Practitioners of realpolitik may downplay Zelensky's focus on common principles and the constant struggle between democracy and authoritarianism if they interpret the guide in ideological terms. However, millions of others in Europe and the US, including his nationals, will not. The political endgame, which determines what constitutes "winning," must reflect results they think deserving of their significant sacrifices [8]. Before the crisis worsens and spreads to other parts of Europe and beyond, this calls for the complete defeat of Russian forces in Ukraine.

1.3. Research Framework

Much of the current research focuses on war's impact on a particular field, the post-war industry, and the world order. This is not only focused on a single discipline but is often interdisciplinary and multi-perspective. Only a small number focus on the extent to which these decisions determine the direction of the war and that this aid has to some extent, not yet been fully delivered. The decisions of any state are motivated by self-interest and by an objective summary of the laws of fact, i.e., ideology, that make up the current situation. In this paper, we will start with classifying international influences and use a comparative political perspective to analyze this impact on both sides' decisions. These influences will then be speculated upon and suggested to varying degrees concerning the war's end and the region's future political situation.

2. Methods

2.1. Literature Analysis Method

In order to determine the most important characteristics of materials, literature research approach involves reading, analyzing, and sorting books [9]. Because this paper needs a lot of data to support it, the literature analysis is important. To some extent, the key data will also vary between reports and media, so macro considerations are needed. The analysis will be based on the three basic concepts of 'system, structure, and function' in comparative politics. An attempt will be made to summarize the performance and feedback under different systems, and the approach in this section tends to be pluralistic. Most of the quotes in this paper have limitations and validity and may be subject to bias in data and positions in the future.

2.2. Simply Functionalism Method

A theoretical paradigm known as "structural functionalism" views society as a complex system whose components cooperate to advance stability and solidarity [10]. The material and economic dimensions do not solely determine the conduct and change of war: there is, of course, the ideology. Drawing on a key concept in comparative politics: In accordance with the structural-functionalist viewpoint, this paper will view societies as coherent, bounded, and fundamentally relational constructions that operate like organisms, whose various (or social institutions) collaborate inadvertent-

ly and almost automatically to achieve overall social equilibrium. An effort is made to create a military model where the first environment has a significant influence on ideology and self-orientation toward the future.

3. Results

3.1. Military Tactics and Doctrinal Analysis

Both sides, as former Soviet states, reacted in very different ways to the military display of this war. This paper analyses their guiding ideologies first because the military form model largely reflects ideology, which is precisely the key to analyzing the state's exposure to external influences. In the case of war, military skills will be closely integrated with equipment and logistics, so foreign military aid and sanctions can be evident in the short term. It is mainly at socio-economic development and diplomacy in the medium to long term.

As far as Russian operational thinking is concerned, our observations lead us to conclude that there is a greater tendency toward traditional Soviet strategy, but it is stagnating. This is similar to the evolution from a front-line confrontation with a wide frontal battlefield to a deep breakthrough. The idea of deep operation, developed by Tukhachevsky, states that combined arms forces should attack far behind enemy lines in order to destroy their rear and supply lines [11]. The Russian army is at the station's border, with four major clusters of ground forces of about 200,000 troops [12]. On the other hand, the Ukrainian army adopts an echelon of equipment using a typical defense-in-depth model. In addition to high-precision weapons targeted killings, ground combat Russian forces used a depth flash warfare method. In this theory, the Russian forces successfully broke through the Ukrainian defenses and opened gaps.

As the war began, four major Russian attack groups quickly broke through the front line of the Ukrainian defenses Northern Front: From Belarus, Russian forces, comprising the 29th, 35th, and 36th Combined Arms Armies, moved on Kiev [13 - 14]. Northeastern Front: Russian forces, notably the 2nd Guards Combined Arms and 41st Combined Arms Armies, advanced against Kyiv from the west [15]. Eastern Front: Russian forces, notably the 1st Guards Tank Army and the 20th and 6th Combined Arms Armies, moved into Kharkiv and out of the Donbas [16]. Russian troops, comprising the 58th, 49th, and 8th Combined Arms Armies, the 7th Air Assault Division of the VDV, and the 11th Air Assault Brigade of the VDV, advanced from the Crimea in three directions: west toward Odesa, north toward Zaporizhzhia, and east toward Mariupol [17]. The Russian forces chose not to entangle themselves too much with the Ukrainians during the breakthrough but to advance directly towards their targets. They soon reached the depths of the Ukrainians and managed to reach or take control of some of the major cities. The main problem for the Russians is the disproportion between their strategic aims and the amount of military effort they are putting in. In the north Russian forces have advanced close to Kiev, but only as far as Kharkov [18]. In the east, they are tangled up in places like Slavyansk [19]. In the south, they are more successful, capturing Kherson, but are also unable to break through further while encountering easily defensible fortresses like Mariupol [20]. In this situation, as they could not continue to commit their forces, the Russians could not take these key points and retreat unwillingly. The battle was completely stalemated, but the delay favored the Ukrainian forces. This was when the role of aid became apparent.

From the Ukrainian army's point of view, it did not flee in the face of the Russian breakthrough but retreated into the city and contracted its defenses. As a former Soviet country, they were well aware of the Russian way of fighting. They also relied on the US-led West to provide accurate Russian intelligence to the Ukrainian forces, which allowed them to adjust their deployment in response to the breakthrough successfully.

According to the list of aid released by the White House on March 16, the early stages of the conflict were dominated by light weapons and individual equipment, more typically Stinger anti-aircraft systems, javelins, light anti-armor weapons, helmets, and AT-4 anti-armor systems [21]. This reflects the West's suspicion of Ukraine's ability and will to resist and its desire to clarify its position while maximizing its ability to kill and injure Russian troops. But a complete lack of confidence that it will be able to withstand the Russian offensive.

However, as the Russian force contracted in the second stage, the situation changed. Russian soldiers outgun them 20 to 1 with artillery and 40 to 1 with ammunition [22]. The basic tactics of Russian artillery of this period were based on a closed loop formed by drones and artillery fire, the use of which had become quite proficient and from which the beginnings of multi-domain warfare can be seen. This was when the impact of aid arrived on a functional and ideological level: with the military aid that followed, a new operational philosophy was injected into Ukraine. This is particularly evident in the M142 HIMARS system. The struggle between Ukrainians battling to maintain their national sovereignty and Russian soldiers that unlawfully invaded that country is being impacted by American High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems [22]. Although, in the grand scheme of things, even with a small number of advanced artillery pieces, they did not make much of a difference. But it was then used in conjunction with many advanced Western doctrines, such as Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2), which showed significant results. Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov voiced that they believe the Himars units could turn the tide against Russian invaders [23]. Combining the JADC2 with the Seamaster will allow the UAF to conduct precision strikes deep inside the Russian army. Full area operations supported by the JADC2, the use of artificial intelligence, linking information and firepower, makes it very easy for commanders to prioritize against vulnerabilities and threats, effectively reducing the time to attack [24]. While it is impossible to quickly turn the tide of battle with these advanced weapons with a boastful element, it will add to the cognitive burden of the opponent and thus gain an asymmetric advantage. If NATO provides more advanced long-range firepower equipment and connects them to JADC2, Russian forces may face more trouble if they do not find a way to break it.

3.2. Economic Sanctions and the War Effort

The war has been costly for Russia, although Russia has not disclosed the exact expenditure as it is a state secret. In addition to the military costs, the West has sought to punish Russia by imposing harsh sanctions - the biggest blow to the Russian economy since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Russia's central bank assets have been frozen, stopping it from using the \$630bn (£470bn) reserves it has in foreign currencies [25]. According to predictions made by the Russian central bank, the economy would contract by 4% to 6% this year and between 1% and 4% in 2023 before recovering to positive growth in 2024 [26]. Following the Russo-Ukrainian war, Western sanctions against Russia have taken on a clear strategic objective, not just at the economic level. But with the clear strategic goal of shaking Russia's economic foundations in the shortest possible time, targeting the financial and fiscal systems that underpin Russia's ability to fight wars. Following the sanctions, the Russian stock market was closed, undermining confidence in the Russian financial system and shaking the credit base of the rouble. This all-encompassing economic warfare against Russia bordered on system-wide economic sanctions to which Russia had little means to respond. The practice of closing the stock market, defaulting on bonds, and nationalizing foreign-owned enterprises was a reverse self-decoupling and self-imposed blockade. Of course, Europe and the United States have not lost much in the economic war. Still, the total economic output of the West accounts for about half of the world, while Russia's share is less than 2%. Even if the losses on both sides are equal, the consequences are not equal, with Russia losing half of its GDP. At the same time, its opponents' losses are even within the range of economic fluctuations, which will inevitably impact the

support for the war [27]. However, we note that for Russia, as mentioned earlier, the impact of the Western sanctions has been less than expected. This is because Russia has remained very resilient to the sanctions. Firstly, on the supply side of the war, Russia has the opportunity to make up for some of the shortfalls in foreign supplies with its industrial production. Secondly, foreign exchange and the international dimension can be used to open up new markets through multiple channels. The key to solving this problem is the establishment of financial trade channels unrelated to the dollar, the euro, and Western financial institutions. This task is technically and politically feasible, while the West's attrition due to sanctions cannot be underestimated.

The grants and loans pledged to Ukraine by the West have been arriving much slower than expected. So far, only €1 billion out of a €9 billion (\$9.3 billion) long-term loan package proposed by the European Commission in May has arrived. Multiple indicators suggest that Ukraine suffers much more than Russia [28]. Aid from major European countries to Ukraine has been falling since April, and in July, six major EU countries did not mention aid to Ukraine due to their problems at home. The loss of financial support and support at the political and military levels will be profoundly affected as time goes on. Zelensky's response to this reality was to print money. The US rushed to add the amount of military aid, but as the note mentions, this money was used more for government operations. But these bills on increasing the currency could cut revenues to the state budget or increase its spending, which could unbalance Ukraine's public finances. Central bank financing of a deficit can increase inflation risks. Just as Oleg Ustenko said, a presidential adviser on economic issues, Ukraine's state budget deficit is expected to reach \$50 billion by the end of the year. That is about 30-35% of the country's GDP, he said in a TV interview last month, adding that "this is a problem of war."

4. Discussion

4.1. All Wars Come to an End

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is the most extensive belligerent action between states since World War II and threatens the world order established in the wake of that war [29]. The question is no longer who will win this war but how Ukraine will lose it. Davyd Arakhamia, the main negotiator for Ukraine, reportedly indicated in Mid-June that 200 to 500 Ukrainian troops die every day. We can estimate the total casualties to be about 18-200,000, meaning that more than half of the Ukrainian army's standing forces have already suffered casualties in combat. Given that the majority of its heavy weaponry has been destroyed by the Russians and, as noted above, the West is no longer generous with military aid, the Ukrainian army's ability to fight will inevitably fall into a downward curve [30]. It is only theoretically feasible to kill Russian forces in large numbers or even to launch a major counter-offensive.

After the slow delivery of a small amount of pre-committed hardware, such as the field air defense systems mentioned above, we fear that Ukraine will struggle to receive substantial military aid in 2022. Given that the US will hold mid-term elections in early November 2022, the current ruling Democratic Party will not allow the Russian-Ukrainian conflict to go down the path of a peaceful settlement before the elections. It is expected that the Ukrainian army will try to keep the front line within the Donetsk region for the next two months at the cost of significant depletion of its living forces. The most optimistic estimates from Russian military scholars suggest that the "special military operation" will end in late 2022 or early 2023, with Russian forces and pro-Russian forces taking full control of Luhansk and Donetsk, and Kherson oblasts, but whether this is achievable remains highly controversial.

4.2. At the Military Level

As far as the military is concerned, whenever it is conducted, it means casualties. In the current situation, the UPDF could operate in tactical teams of 100-200 fighters, using the wide front to launch small counter-attacks in “grey areas” to slow or even stop the Russian offensive in certain areas. Such operations, which rely on advanced concepts and weapons, are effective but inevitably entail the loss of elite combatants. The optimistic view is that the Ukrainian forces will try to keep the front within the Donetsk region at the cost of a significant drain on their living forces.

Aid to so-called sophisticated weapons is not the answer. It should be coupled with sanctions especially to reduce Russia’s dependence on external suppliers for relevant military technology, including semiconductors, computers, and telecommunications technology. In particular, Ukraine could consider incorporating technologies, including those advanced integrated combat systems like Mosaic, to gain an advantage in this area. Any military action must also manage the sources of escalation carefully. Reaffirm NATO’s unity, including NATO’s commitment to Article 5 based on a robust deterrence posture [31]. Keep channels of communication open with Moscow. The fact that there is still a huge gap between the Russian integrated warfare system and Ukraine could well explain the current stalemate on the Russian-Ukrainian battlefield. Differences in military power do not lead to quick victories, but concepts and systems of warfare do, as they did in the Blitzkrieg and the Gulf War. In general, the Russian army has superior strength but an outdated concept, while the Ukrainian army, although weaker, has an advanced system. With the current Russian-Ukrainian approach and if NATO strictly controls the escalation and the use of conventional weapons, there is every reason to believe that the Russian army will still slowly achieve its stated objectives. And it is only a matter of time and cost.

4.3. Post-War Order and Economy

The Ukrainian Prime Minister updated the list of “national losses” demanded from the West, with the reconstruction cost rising to \$750 billion [32]. Ukraine’s top brass has been hoping that the West will be able to cover this debt and give Ukraine a long-term post-war aid transfusion, a new “Marshall Plan” it might be called. Not many European countries have made a clear statement, only a few countries, such as the UK, Turkey, and Denmark, have said they will assist Ukraine, and no specific amounts have been announced. If the current pattern continues, Ukraine will not only fail to raise the amount they want, but it will be difficult to raise even the basic amount, so they must find an effective way to force European countries to come up with the money. Zelensky has repeatedly proposed to Europe and the US that they could compensate for their domestic losses by freezing Russian foreign currency. Still, this has not materialized so far, which shows how difficult the final payment is.

Although there is no clear information about the war’s end, Ukraine is also currently in debt. With regard to post-war construction, which is also heavily influenced by aid, the provision of reconstruction funds to Ukraine is prefaced by the condition that Ukraine needs to carry out “reforms” and increase financial transparency to ensure that corruption does not undermine any reconstruction plans before they can be effectively assisted. When the EU created the “candidate” system, it did the same thing by making candidate countries carry out so-called reforms and waiting for them to meet EU criteria before joining. Still, these so-called reform criteria were not defined in any way, and it was the EC’s judgment whether they met them. The promise of reform is now being made, leading to speculation as to whether this means that they have a reason to take less money, and there is even reason to suspect that the implications will have geopolitical implications.

Ukraine’s future trade prospects depend not only on its trading partners but also on rebuilding the material damage suffered by the country and the state of its ports. Ukraine should reorient itself

from the export of raw materials to the production of high-value-added goods. The government should not rely only on financial aid; transparency and accountability can stimulate foreign direct investment [33-34]. The attention of Ukraine's leadership is now rightly focused on the war, but understanding that the next step includes triage and planning for recovery phases to come will leave Ukraine better prepared when that day arrives.

Direct economic measures on Russia are failing to take momentum. As was already mentioned, this is even partially correcting the catastrophe into which the West has been thrust. An alternative is to decouple Russia from the supply of high-tech goods by targeted restrictions on certain technologies, financial sanctions, and sanctions against private enterprises. Without success, Russia has attempted to evade technology restrictions by substituting imports. Since many different nations contribute to the creation of high-tech items, a single economy cannot match the capabilities of a global network. Sanctions are already having an effect in several high-tech product sectors. Longer term sanctions will also negatively impact Russia's potential for economic growth and assure that fighting will cause Russia to lose its status as a modern economy.

5. Conclusion

This paper dissects the construction of external factors on the war model using a comparative political science approach, starting from both military and economic aspects. The main limitation is that specific numerical information does not allow for uniform answers, leading to errors in the analysis.

The influence of external factors on the Russian-Ukrainian war is unquestionable, and the negative attitude of the US and the EU towards Ukraine is equally influencing the next step. The EU should be as united as it reacted initially, and the sanctions against Russia lack a certain amount of planning. As far as the military is concerned, it is only a matter of time before Russia reaches its goal. The talk of reconstruction is still too far away, and the negotiations for war need a very thick and extensive agreement that will determine the future geopolitical and international landscape.

Without a clear end in sight, the battle in Ukraine rages on. People suffer casualties and lose loved ones on a daily basis. The hours before dawn are the darkest, and perhaps the bloodshed will soon end. Ukraine will continue to exist as a sovereign, democratic nation and will start a successful economic recovery. On the other hand, those who have received unfair treatment are free to take the direction that best fits them and long live peace.

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